one or more projections, and with each reciprocably-displaceable mounting member being biased via a first bias away from the other member of the pair;

a mechanism configured to selectively apply a second bias to each biased member to counteract the first bias and displace the biased member toward the other member of the pair; and

a stencil comprising a central body having one or more apertures formed through the stencil thickness to define a pattern for printing solder on said substrate, said central body of said stencil defined by four peripheral edges, wherein each of said four peripheral edges of said stencil comprises a plurality of receiving apertures, said receiving apertures configured to receive said projections of each of said mounting members such that when the second bias is not applied, said stencil is tensioned along two axes.

11. (Amended) The apparatus for supporting and tensioning a stencil of claim 8, further comprising an elongate support surface abutting the stencil when the stencil is mounted on the projections, wherein the elongate support surface is curved to facilitate flexing of the stencil.

14. (Amended) The apparatus for supporting and tensioning a stencil of claim 8, wherein the plurality of projections do not extend into a horizontal plane of the stencil when the stencil is engaged and flexed thereon.

24. (Amended) A stencil comprising a central body having one or more apertures formed through the stencil thickness to define a pattern for printing solder on a substrate, said central body of said stencil defined by four peripheral edges, wherein each of said four peripheral edges of said stencil is provided with a plurality of receiving apertures which define a plurality of elongated slots separated by a plurality of elongated strips, said elongated slots and said elongated strips being of substantially the same width.

Please add the following new claims:

25. The stencil of claim 24, wherein opposing edges of the central body are of equal length.

26. The stencil of claim 24, wherein the central body comprises a stencil foil comprising a thin metallic sheet.

27. The stencil of claim 24, wherein the four peripheral edges each include more than two receiving apertures.

28. A stencil comprising a metallic sheet having one or more apertures formed through the thickness of the metal sheet to define a pattern for printing solder on a substrate, the metal sheet also having four peripheral edges, and the metal sheet defining a plurality of receiving apertures along each peripheral edge.

29. The stencil of claim 28, wherein opposing edges of the central body are of equal length.

30. The stencil of claim 28, wherein the four peripheral edges each include more than two receiving apertures.

31. The stencil of claim 30, wherein the four peripheral edges each include more than twenty receiving apertures.

32. The stencil of claim 31, wherein the receiving apertures are in the form of elongated slots separated by elongated strips.

33. The stencil of claim 32, wherein the elongated slots and the elongated strips are of substantially the same width.